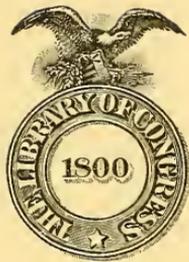


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John Pierpont
on
Horace Holley.
Bost. 1827.



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Respects of S. May

A

DISCOURSE

DELIVERED IN

HOLLIS STREET CHURCH,

BOSTON, SEPTEMBER 2, 1827:

OCCASIONED

Sale

by the Death of

HORACE HOLLEY LL. D.

LATE PRESIDENT OF TRANSYLVANIA UNIVERSITY.

BY JOHN PIERPONT,
MINISTER OF HOLLIS STREET CHURCH.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

BOSTON,

FROM THE PRESS OF THE CHRISTIAN EXAMINER.

Stephen Foster, Printer.

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IN EXHIBITION

of the Hist. Gen. Soc.

THE
HISTORICAL
GENEALOGICAL
SOCIETY

DISCOURSE.

JOHN V. 35.

HE WAS A BURNING AND A SHINING LIGHT; AND YE WERE WILLING,
FOR A SEASON, TO REJOICE IN HIS LIGHT.

THE relation of minister and people, that, for almost ten years, subsisted between the late President Holley and the christian community that come up to this house to worship, has been, indeed, for many years, dissolved—as that relation ought always to be dissolved, when death does not come in to break it up—by the mutual consent and independent agreement of the parties. But it is forbidden by the constitution of our moral nature, as it is inconsistent with our social and religious affections, that we should be indifferent to the weal or the woe of one who has, for years, devoted himself to the interesting offices of the christian ministry, who has given us religious instruction, and led us in our public devotions, even though the tie has been unloosed that once bound us together. It is forbidden that we should look upon him as a stranger

while he lives, or pass by his memory, or his remains, as we would those of a stranger, when he is dead. The mournful intelligence has reached us that the man who once stood up in this place, in the sight of a great portion of this congregation, as the servant of Jesus Christ and as an expositor of his gospel of truth, and peace, and hope, and life, is dead. In the language of an apostle I may say, ‘And now behold, I know that ye all, among whom he went, preaching the kingdom of God, shall see his face no more.’*

We have come together to bring back his image to our minds; to ask of faithful memory and kind affection, that they would unite their efforts for a few moments, and retrace the noble and beautiful picture that has already begun to fade, but which we would not lose. We have come to speak as we may of him who, from this place, once spoke so well of the value and the power of a rational faith, and of that moral integrity, and that bold and uncompromising mental independence, which bring the true lovers of Religious Truth to her abode and her embrace. We may not indeed speak worthily, we may not speak wisely; but honestly we may and will speak. Even if the pulpit which the deceased once adorned were now venal, had it lost its honesty when it lost its ornament, he left no legacy to purchase praise; and, as flattery cannot ‘soothe the dull cold ear of Death,’ so neither can

* Acts xx. 25.

the lips of the dead, however eloquent they may once have been, repay in kind a heartless and a worthless panegyric from the lips of the living.

HORACE HOLLEY, the fourth minister of this church, and first President of Transylvania University after its reorganization in 1818, was born in Salisbury, Connecticut, in February, 1781. He was the son of Luther Holley, and was one of six brothers, to all of whom the Creative Spirit, both physically and intellectually, had imparted largely of his best gifts. He was graduated at Yale College, 1803, with one of the highest honors of that institution, at that time under the presidency of Dr Dwight. Immediately after leaving college Mr Holley entered upon the study of the Law, with Peter W. Radcliff Esq. a highly reputable lawyer, of New York; with whom, however, he did not remain many months before he gave up his flattering prospects of distinction at the bar, and, returning to New Haven in 1804, entered upon his theological studies with President Dwight, by whose counsels he was probably not a little influenced, in determining to change his professional course. Early in the year 1806, soon after he had completed his course of theological studies preparatory to the christian ministry, he was ordained as pastor of the parish of Greenfield Hill, in Fairfield County, Connecticut; the place which Dr Dwight had held previous to his acceptance of the presidency at

New Haven. After a short ministry there, he was regularly dismissed from his charge at Greenfield, by a Consociation of ministers, meeting at that place on the thirteenth of September, 1808, from which ecclesiastical body Mr Holley received a certificate of his regular dismissal, in which ‘ they declare their entire approbation of his ministerial character, and recommend him to the grace of God and the churches as a gospel minister.’ *

On the eighth of the following March, 1809, Mr Holley was installed pastor of this church ; in which office he continued till 1818. Early this year, he received an invitation from the Trustees of Transylvania University, at Lexington, Kentucky, to become the President of that institution, which, having existed in a feeble and languishing state for more than thirty years, the friends of science in the West had made an effort to awaken and call forth from the dust. On receiving this invitation Mr Holley visited Lexington for the purpose of gaining, from personal observation, that knowledge which he deemed necessary as the basis of an enlightened decision of the question then before him ; and while there, under the immediate pressure of flattering representations and sanguine hopes, he so far departed from the counsels and affectionate intreaties of his personal friends in this neighbourhood, as to give an answer accepting the invitation

* See certificate referred to, in the Records of Hollis Street Church, p. 263.

of the Trustees, before his return to the field of his past labors.

On the twentyfourth of August, 1818, the communicants and the noncommunicants of this church, by their joint act, voted unanimously, ‘that their pastor, the Rev. Horace Holley, be, at his request, dismissed from this church, and that his pastoral relation be dissolved ;’ and on the afternoon of the first Sunday of October following, he bade adieu to his people from this place ; and not to his people alone, but to a throng of assembled citizens, which no one who formed a part of it, will soon forget. Since that time, with the exception of a few days during a visit to this place in the summer of 1822, we have neither seen his face, nor heard his voice in our churches. He gave himself, with little remission, to the laborious and most trying duties of his station, until the beginning of the present year ; when, as it would seem from all the evidence that is before us, after more than eight years of honorable toil, attended by too little of honorable support, and followed by too little of honorable reward, he resigned his office, and, with his wife and son—his daughter having been married in Kentucky—went down to New Orleans in the month of March, with a view of embarking for Europe with some young gentlemen, of whom he was to have the instruction and the care for several years. His hopes, however, from this quarter, were blasted, and that expedition was given over. Another door of useful

and honorable employment for his splendid talents, was opened to his hopes in the immediate vicinity of New Orleans; before entering which, however, he determined to spend two or three months, with his little family, in the Northern States.

He embarked for New York on the twentysecond of July last. But he had remained too long on the fertile, but too fatal banks of the Mississippi. The plague that falls upon so many of the children of New England—the pestilence that walketh on those shores in darkness, and wasteth on those waters at noonday—had marked our friend for its victim. When but a few days at sea, the yellow fever showed itself on board. One after another fell before the destroyer. It was a scene of suffering and of horrible fear. So intense was the heat, that the deck was the couch of the sick and the well alike. By night, as well as by day, a canvass sheet alone shielded them from sun and storm. She who for so many years was with you, my brethren, in your daily walks, and your weekly worship, was the only one of her sex on board. She was herself wasting and withering under the dreadful malady. One fellow sufferer breathed his last at her side, in the dead of night, in the midst of a thunder tempest. He who had watched over her with a husband's love, and, with a father's fears, had trembled for his son, felt at last the blow upon his own brain. His reason reeled under the shock. His noble form fell down, when that fell down which

was its glory. The mighty, in form and in mind, wrestled strenuously, wrestled madly, with Death: but what is the strength of man, when wrestling with that dread Angel of the Lord! On the morning of the thirtyfirst our friend died; and at evening, the same day, his remains were let down into the deep.

The memory of many who hear me, will do not a little towards filling up a part, at least, of the outline which I have thus attempted to trace, according to the knowledge which I have been able to gain, of the life of the late President Holley. My own opportunities of personal acquaintance with him have ever been more limited than, had I been free to choose, my choice would have made them. I knew him in college; but our classes, our acquaintances, and our associations were so different that I may almost say that I had no personal acquaintance with him, until his return to New Haven to enter upon his theological studies. After that time I saw somewhat more of him than I had done, until the end of the collegiate year after he received the honors of the College. From that period I saw him no more until I saw him standing where I now stand. Between the years 1811 and 1818, it was my good fortune to hear him, once or twice a year, in his own pulpit, and occasionally in others; to be recognized by him as an acquaintance, and more than once to be the object of his courteous notice and hospitable atten-

tions at his own house. I hope that I may be pardoned in this departure from the immediate and exclusive subject of this discourse ; for I allow myself in it as well for the sake of gratefully and publicly acknowledging the kindness on his part, which marked all of the limited intercourse that I was permitted to have with him while he lived, as for the sake of presenting to my hearers a simple, but, I trust, a sufficient apology for not filling out, in a manner more worthy of its subject, the portrait which ought to be drawn and preserved of his social, intellectual, moral, and religious character. In performing this part of the melancholy duty in which I am engaged, I feel a diffidence by which I am not a little embarrassed and oppressed. But I have this to console and encourage me ; the consideration, that, in respect to his qualities and his character as a christian minister, my want of knowledge, touching peculiar and distinctive points, will be abundantly supplied by the knowledge, the thorough, practical knowledge, of many who hear me ; and that, in respect to the fitness of our friend for the station to which he was called when he relinquished the ministerial office, and in respect to his faithfulness to the duties of that new station, we have the testimony of gentlemen, who for years were associated with him in those duties, who could not but know whether he was competent and faithful to them, and whose testimony, as they have given it to the world, is unequivocal and full,

and as honorable to them, as it is to the distinguished subject of it.

Of the person of Mr Holley little need be said. It has been already remarked, that, physically as well as intellectually, the Creative Spirit had imparted to him largely of his best gifts; the gifts of personal beauty, grace, health, and strength. By some it may be thought that these things, when we are speaking of a man, and that in a solemn assembly, and in a religious service, are unworthy of our notice. From such I differ; believing that the gifts of personal beauty, and strength, and grace, which it is worthy of the wisdom of God to produce and bestow, it is worthy of the highest of his creatures to recognize and admire. Yet, the manly form, the visage bestowed by Heaven on man to be lifted upwards to itself, the keen and beaming eye, the lofty and polished forehead that swells above it, as

‘The dome of thought, the palace of the soul,’

are indeed to be regarded as secondary to the thought that dwells beneath that dome, the soul that is enthroned in that palace.

It is principally and emphatically as an intellectual man that the friends of Mr Holley would choose to remember him, and that he would choose to be remembered by them. It was mind, the apprehending, combining, reasoning faculty; it was mind, in the gift of which the dominion was given to man over brute beasts, and in the greater powers of

which, there is given to one man dominion over another ; it was this which gave to the subject of the present discourse all the preeminence over others which he was ambitious to secure in life, and for which he would be ambitious to be remembered after death.

And, were I called upon to state in what particulars the mind of Holley had the advantage, when compared with most of even the leading minds of his age, I should say, in promptness, and in power ; promptness in apprehending, in comparing, in combining, in following out another's train of reasoning, or in tracing out a course for himself ; promptness in summoning up around him, to wait his bidding, the forces by which, in polemical or metaphysical warfare, his own citadel was to be defended, or the entrenched fortress of his adversary stormed ; promptness, with which he would bring hypothesis, analogy, and stubborn fact, into his service, and marshal and display them ; and power, by which, when he had gathered all his forces around him, and glanced his keen eye along the array, he would move them on towards one point, and wield them as with one effort, and throw all their mass upon the one point selected for assault. Nor was the promptness of our friend less conspicuous in acquiring knowledge, from books and from its other sources, than it was in giving it a direct application when acquired. By what must have appeared to most men as a cursory glance over the leaves of

a book, he would come into a more thorough and practical possession of its contents, than many others by a repeated and diligent reading; and what he was thus prompt to acquire, he was at all times equally prompt to impart, in public and in private, in the great assembly, and in social circles;—to impart even with a readiness and a copiousness which sometimes gave occasion to his friends to complain of a redundance, while in his company, rather than of a dearth.

The accomplishment by which Holley was especially distinguished, and in respect to which he stood unquestionably the first, I do not say in his profession merely, but in any profession, in the present age and in our own country; an accomplishment implying literary wealth and intellectual power, was extemporaneous, popular eloquence. Other scholars may have written more elegantly than he; other orators may, by patiently holding communion with the mighty dead, in the solitude of the library and by the midnight lamp, have brought out a discourse, which, tried by the canons of criticism, and given to the world from the press, might be transmitted through a longer series of ages, and be more admired for its ‘lucid order,’ and for the finished elegance of its composition. But if I am asked where is, or where or when there has been, the man, in this country, who, at a single hour’s notice, would come into a great assembly more promptly, and sooner charm the multitude to

silence, or chain them longer to their seats, and move them more absolutely at his will, and make them more entirely his own, by the power of his eloquence, I must answer, that I do not know. An elegant form, a graceful action, a countenance beaming at once with the expression of earnestness and intelligence, an elocution ready and perfectly distinct, though sometimes rapid and always energetic, a manner graceful and full of dignity; these natural advantages, superadded to his intellectual powers, enabled him to become what, by discipline and culture, he made himself, probably the most accomplished and efficient pulpit orator that our country has produced.

To such as may consider this as too high praise I would remark, that that is the most efficient oratory which, in the greatest degree, produces the effects of oratory. I would refer to Mr Holley's oration at Plymouth, on the anniversary of the landing of the Fathers of New England there; to his oration before the Washington Benevolent Society; to his sermon before the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company; and to his discourse on the anniversary of the Boston Female Asylum. Not a few who hear me now, heard him on some one, and probably there are those present who heard him on all, of these occasions. To such I would propose the question, as matter of sober, practical reality, not of partial, or extravagant eulogium, Where, and when, and by whom, have you seen

the effects of popular eloquence more obviously and triumphantly exhibited? have you seen greater crowds drawn together, and kept together? feelings more highly excited? the sentiments of charity, patriotism, philanthropy more widely awakened? the breathing, but noiseless multitude more strongly seized upon, and bound, and led away whithersoever the speaker would? You heard him before the Artillery Company. I do not, by reminding you of his triumph on that occasion, say that I approve of the noisy demonstration of excited and gratified feeling, the outright applause, which, then, for the first and last time in New England, broke out in the house of God, and echoed from its walls. In ancient times, indeed, and in warmer latitudes, applause in christian churches, and even acclamations were not infrequent; the delight of the hearers was expressed by clapping the hands, and stamping with the feet, and crying out ‘Orthodox!’* But for many ages, and throughout Christendom, all acclamations and applause have been deemed inconsistent with the due decorum of a christian assembly, engaged in a religious service. And, when we consider that this custom of applauding a pulpit orator obtained principally, even in ancient times, in the warm climes of the East—in Rome, and Africa, and Constantinople—and under the preaching of the great masters of pulpit eloquence—

* See Lardner’s Works, Vol. I. p. 621, 622. Ed. Encycl. Art. ‘Acclamation.’

Augustine, and Jerome, and Chrysostom ; and when we consider moreover that

‘ The cold in climate are cold in blood,’

I know not what it may prove to others to be told, or to see, that in our cold regions, where a fervid eloquence is frowned upon, under the very shadow of an iceberg that chills the young orator’s veins as he looks up to it as ‘ the hill from whence cometh his help,’ and that gives forth its light as coldly though as clearly as the moon gives down hers ; I know not what it may prove to others to be told that, under such circumstances, a man had so seized upon and spell-bound a thronged church as to make the whole multitude so far forget the occasion, the place, the coldness of the rhetorical atmosphere, so far to forget the decorums of the age, and, what is more, so far to forget the fashion, as to break in upon his discourse by outright applause ; but to me, it proves that that man had risen above all others of his country and his age, as an accomplished and efficient orator.

I speak to those who have heard him of whom I speak. You have heard him, my friends, you have felt him. More than once he had many of you in his power, while he lived. I ask no more than that you should do justice to that power now that he is dead. The chain is broken that often bound you. But you will not be so unjust as to deny, you will not be so ungenerous as to forget, that it did bind you once,

although his absence has long left it hanging loosely upon you, and it is now entirely broken by his death.

Of the variety of Mr Holley's attainments, and of the versatility of his powers, many who hear me are the witnesses. Scarcely any department of the sciences passed altogether without his notice. Wherever he happened to be thrown, into whatever region, of poetry, or of romance, of history, or of physical science, of politics, or of the fine arts—and into all of these regions he was sometimes led, in his extensive ranges among the various circles in which he moved—he never appeared as a stranger. He seemed to have been there before, and to have prepared himself to give an account of his travels. It was probably even one of the weak points of his character, that he was ambitious of doing so many things better than another could do them. A weak point, I say, because it implied that he either did not know, or did not consider, that, upon one of the most thoroughly established principles of our intellectual nature, it is impossible for the same mind to be first, at the same time, in great things and in small; that 'to be sublimely great, and elegantly little' is incompatible; that if a man will have the sublimity and dignity of Milton, he must not hope to attain the polish and epigrammatic sententiousness of Pope; and that if he is already in possession of Bacon's depth and original strength, he must not covet the elegance and grace of Addison.

Yet, by the variety of his attainments, our deceased friend was especially well qualified for the

station for which he left this city. Of his qualifications for the presidency of Transylvania University, as well as of his efficiency and fidelity in that high office, having, thus far, spoken of those things of which my hearers are his witnesses, it is due to him, as it must be gratifying to his friends here, to let those testify, who knew him well as the head of that literary institution, who were associated with him in the labors of instruction, and who have felt themselves called upon, in justice to a man who had been the subject of base and broad-mouthed slander, to give their testimony to the world. This was done, more than two years ago, in a pamphlet to which Professors Barry, Bledsoe, Dudley, and Caldwell, of Transylvania University, gave their names, and which they sent abroad, to enlighten, and thus to disabuse, the Western community, in regard to the subject of this discourse. The testimony of these gentlemen, I now give you.—

‘To say that as a gentleman of polished manners, unimpeachable morals, correct and elevated sentiments, steady friendships, active and industrious habits, and social qualities peculiarly attractive, the example of the President, far from being dangerous to the youth that have intercourse with him, is worthy of their imitation, is but to assert that which all who know him intimately, are ready to confirm. If his deportment is free from the austerity of the recluse, and the formality of the pedant, it is equally so from every thing that can subject him to merited reproach.

‘Of his qualifications as an executive officer, and his capability to teach the branches of science appertaining to his province, it would be superfluous to speak. In these respects, his enemies themselves have never denied his peculiar preeminence. Nor is he less distinguished by his devotedness to his duties, than his ability to perform them. The love of instruction is his ruling passion. In evidence of this, it may be safely affirmed that his academical labors more than double those of the President of any other similar institution in the United States.

‘By individuals who have never attended to the subject, this assertion may appear hyperbolical, perhaps unfounded. But let such be assured that, on a fair and dispassionate inquiry, they will find it within the limits of sober truth. Instead, therefore, of confiding in the statements here presented, they are earnestly invited to institute such an inquiry, and judge for themselves. This is the form of comparison and trial, which, in all cases, the President and his friends are solicitous to attain. From this they will neither shrink under a consciousness of deficiency or fault, nor utter a complaint of it, be the issue what it may.’

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‘Let the present controversy eventuate as it may, in relation to the fortunes of the President, in the station which he occupies, the period of his direction of the affairs of the University will be always referred to as the fairest era of reform and improve-

ment in its general administration, nor can an institution be found, either in Europe or America, that has, in so short a time, been so signally and extensively benefited by the labors of an individual, as Transylvania has by his, within the last six years. If these assertions are unfounded, they are susceptible of refutation, and ought to be refuted. If true, his enemies and persecutors must consent to be regarded as the enemies of the West, if they do not silence them. On this ground his friends will fearlessly hazard the issue of the controversy. Let time determine whether his accusers will accept the challenge.'

* * * *

‘When invited to the superintendence of its interests and destinies, the President found the institution destitute of arrangements for instruction in the professions of medicine and law. To these points his vigilant attention was early directed. Nor was it bestowed on them feebly or without effect. The wisdom of his measures, and the vigor and perseverance of his exertions, in the erection of these two additional departments, are well known and remembered by the citizens of Lexington. The issue is now witnessed in the existence and flourishing condition of a school of medicine and a school of law, which are already, in no ordinary degree, useful and honorable to the States of the West, and which, under an energetic and skilful administration, cannot fail to improve with the progress of time.’

* * * *

‘But his services in relation to the department of law, have not been confined to his agency in its establishment. During the absence of one of the Professors, he voluntarily entered upon the duties of his chair, and distinguished himself not a little in the capacity of a teacher. In the performance of these accumulated and arduous labors, he delivered nearly two full courses of lectures on civil and national law, for one of which he refused to accept compensation. But for the versatility of his talents, the extent and diversity of his attainments, and his entire devotion to the instruction of his pupils, the department, on these occasions, would have been defective in its resources, and must have suffered in its reputation by the necessary suspension of a part of its operations.

‘Nor does this amount to a full representation of his exertions in behalf of the department of law. Even before he had effected the organization of that department, and as a measure preparatory to it, he delivered, in person, two courses of instruction on Blackstone’s Commentaries, and instead of retaining the fees himself, which both justice and usage authorized him to do, added them to the common funds of the institution:—a procedure which furnishes something not only less than a proof of the mercenary spirit of which his enemies have accused him, but the very reverse of it.’*

* See an address ‘To the Public,’ in relation to Transylvania University, published in Lexington, Kentucky, probably in 1824, and signed by W. T.

A mercenary spirit!—Friends of the deceased! you have heard what his friends at the West have said to defend him against the slanders of his foes; and here we learn one of the accusations that they brought against him. He was, forsooth, of a mercenary spirit! On the catalogue of his faults—and that he had many faults, they who knew him best, and loved him best, have never yet denied—I believe that those who loved him least, in this neighbourhood, never thought of setting down a mercenary spirit; and if the rest of the charges, brought against him at the West, were as groundless as those of you who knew him, know that this must have been, his friends will have little reason to speak guardedly in his praise, or to tremble for his fame.

I have just said that our friend had faults. He had. To say that he had not, would be to pollute the place that he once adorned. It would be to insult your understandings, and to presume against your knowledge of him and of mankind; nay, it would be to outrage the cherished memory of the dead himself. He knew that he had faults, and none could be more prompt to point them out to him, than he was himself to acknowledge them. It was one of the best traits in his character that he did not seek to hide them. Had he been more

Barry LL. D. late Professor of Civil Law, Jesse Bledsoe LL. D. Professor of Common and Statute Law, B. W. Dudley M. D. Professor of Anatomy and Surgery, and Ch. Caldwell M. D. Professor of the Institutes of Medicine and Clinical Practice, pp. 5—10, *et alibi*.

of a hypocrite, he might have lived with a better reputation in the sight of the saints ; but he would have died with a worse character in the eye of his Judge. No, the deceased was not perfect ; and let him who is, cast the first stone at his memory because he was not. This is not the place to lay open his faults, whatever they may have been. This is not the time to swell that, which, in the eyes of some, may have appeared, and may still appear, the mountain of his sins, by heaping up apologies upon it. It seems to me, however, that we do owe it to ourselves, and to him, and, what is of still greater concern, to the truth, to say, that almost ‘ all his failings leaned to virtue’s side,’ in that they sprung, almost entirely, out of this one defect ; he had too good an opinion of mankind. As he never sought to entangle another in his talk, he did not suspect that there could be any one seeking to entangle him ; to represent that which was said in the unguarded intercourse of the social circle, as something seriously proposed in a grave discourse ; or to pervert that which might be true in one sense, and which a friend would understand as he meant it, into the expression of something shocking to the moral sense, and dishonorable to the christian profession, to say nothing of the ministerial character. Yet there are always such men in the world, and they who think of the world no better than it is, know there are, and do what they may to guard against them. There are still those in the world,

as there were long ago, who, in a trial which is one of life or death to a religious teacher's character, will promptly testify, 'This fellow said I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days,' and who yet will not add, by way of explanation, 'But he spake of the temple of his body.'* To such, our friend, in the simplicity of his own heart, often exposed himself. It was a fault in him that he exposed himself so much.

Yet we may be almost tempted to forgive this fault, of laying himself too freely open to his foes, when we consider that it was so nearly related to the frankness in which he threw open the doors of his heart to his friends; and to that magnanimity, that truly christian magnanimity, which prompted him to bless them who cursed him, and to pray for those who despitefully used, and, as far as the tongue can persecute, persecuted him; that magnanimity in which he opened the doors of this pulpit to the gentleman who was afterwards the first pastor of Park Street Church, not even hoping 'to receive as much again' in having the doors of that pulpit opened to him in return; which led him to lay upon the tomb of the late President of Yale College, a tribute of grateful remembrance, in an eloquent eulogium upon that distinguished divine—which many now present heard—long after a difference in their religious opinions had risen up, as a wall of partition between the venerable teacher and

* Matthew xxvi. 61. John ii. 21.

his favorite pupil; and which, after his removal to the West, in his zeal for the promotion of letters wherever it could be effected, prompted him to become the active advocate of the colleges of Danville and Bowling Green, in Kentucky, although they were intended to be the rivals of Transylvania University, and successfully to exert his influence with his friends to procure for them, at an important and threatening crisis, public patronage, and a grant of money from the legislature of that commonwealth.* How far this last act, especially, of courtesy and magnanimity ought to be reciprocated, an enlightened and magnanimous community can judge. How far it will be, the rigid pen of the historian will record.

Of the theological sentiments or opinions of Mr Holley, it is proper that something, but it is not proper that much, should be said. While he stood in this place, in the office of an expositor of the christian doctrine, and a preacher of righteousness, he laid his opinions and the grounds of them before his people, freely and boldly. We might, indeed, have safely averred that a want of freedom and boldness in this department of his duty would never be laid to his charge, were it not that we have already seen that he has been charged with what we should have as little anticipated from his adversaries, a mercenary spirit. The record of

* See the pamphlet above referred to, p. 15.

what his opinions were, must now be found, principally, in the memory and the convictions of his people ; that of his religious feelings, in the impressions which he made upon their hearts. It is not ours to inquire now, whether in his searchings after truth, he always or never found it. It is enough for us to believe that he loved truth ardently, and sought it earnestly. If any of his fellow Christians say that, in his belief, he departed widely from them, they will do well to remember that they have departed just as widely from him ; and that it is not theirs, nor his, but God's, to determine which sought for the treasures of his truth most faithfully, and which at last sought most successfully, he or they. He has gone now, where, we believe, other volumes of the divine counsels have had their seals broken for his instruction ; where other revelations of the grace and the glory of the Deity have been made to him ; and where that truth, at whose altar he waited and worshipped here, is seen no longer as in a glass, dimly, but face to face.

It will be regretted by the friends of President Holley, as it is unfortunate for his fame as an orator, that he has given so few of his productions to the press. With the exception of an article in the Cambridge Repository,—a Review of Ely's Contrast of Hopkinsianism and Calvinism, published in 1813, without his name,—and a Eulogy on James Morrison, a liberal benefactor of Transylvania University, printed with his name in 1823,—with the last of

which only would his character as a pulpit orator be in the least degree connected—I know of nothing on which his reputation, in this leading trait of his character, can rest, when his contemporaries shall all have passed away. In this respect, we may apply to him his own remark of the celebrated Whitefield, that he has left his fame to rest upon the record of his personal eloquence.*

But what of that! You yourselves, my friends, are witnesses that all that eloquence can give to its possessor in the present life, was given to him, and he enjoyed it. The concourse, gathered and waiting where he is to be heard; the crowd, hushed to silence as he rises; the excitement of such a moment; the heart beating strong and high; the attention and wakening sympathy of the mass, as it begins to warm with the kindlings of his spirit; the consciousness of power, of a high trust used with a high aim; the feeling that his convictions are becoming the convictions of his hearers, and his resolves their resolves; the applause of the wise and good; the gratitude of those on whose heads his eloquence brings down blessings; and, after that, the joyous ‘well done!’ which the heart speaketh; these are things which the benevolent ordinances of the Most High have assigned for the enjoyment of the christian orator, even while he lives; nay, in these things is his life; and in regard to these things, I have a

* See Cambridge Theol. Repository, Vol. iii. p. 352.

cloud of witnesses before me, that our deceased friend, even while he lived, was alike exempted from the power of the press and of posterity; and he might truly say,

These joys are on my soul impressed,
‘And, come what will, I have been blessed.’

You have seen him, my friends, in those seasons of his triumph. You must have entered into his feelings, and sympathized in his joys. If the memory of them still abides with him, and if the still purer joys are his that, in the heavenly world, spring from the consciousness of God devoutly loved, and of man faithfully served; and if the joys are his that gush forth anew, for the refreshment of his spirit, from still higher exercises of powers yet more ennobled, and of affections still more sanctified, may he not well pass by, as a worthless thing, the pleasure that he might now derive from the knowledge that his name should live and be renowned in a world like this!

You have seen him, you have felt him, when he has stood before you in the glory of his intellectual strength, in the beauty of his manhood, in the noon of his life; and, O how changed! we have seen him in the darkness of his dying hour. Of the throngs that have gathered around him to be instructed or delighted by his voice, and that even now come together where his name is to be named, not one was near him to hear the last faint whisper from his lips; not one to kneel in the night watches,

as he had knelt by the death-bed of others, and commend his spirit to the God who gave it. It was in darkness that he lay ; darkness of the skies and of the mind. It was upon the lone waters that he died. Is not thus to die, to taste the bitterness of death ?

And yet, let us not murmur at the dispensations of the Lord, nor complain of his appointments for our friend. If that was the ‘inevitable hour,’ and the path of his glory must then lead him to a grave, were not the circumstances of his death, in sublime harmony with the splendid character of his career ! His life had been a life of excitement. Why should not such be the character of his death ? Why should a spirit, that rejoiced, as his did, to see the elements of the moral world constantly kept in that agitation which gives them health and power, be taken calmly and quietly from among men ? Is there not a fitness and a sublimity in the thought that such a spirit should have set fire to its earthly dwelling when about to leave it, that it should go forth in darkness and tempest, ‘the sea and the waves roaring’ beneath, and above, the lightnings and thunders breaking forth ?

‘He was a burning and a shining light ; and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.’ A voice has reached you, from beyond the mountains, telling you that after he had gone down, to your eyes, he was holding on his high course of splendor and beneficence, and that the hill-tops and

plains of the West, were, in their turn, rejoicing in his beams. But now, his light and his power are lost to the world! Science, and Eloquence, and Friendship mourn his loss. Grateful and kind recollections of ministerial fidelity revive, my friends, in your bosoms, as you gather to the place where he once offered your prayers to that Good Spirit who ruleth the raging of the sea, and sitteth serene upon the floods. From those floods the voice of the fatherless and the widow has reached your ears. ‘My Father, O my Father!’ That cry reaches you, though it went up from the lips of childhood, amidst the roar of winds and many waters. The wail of the sick and solitary widow, too, comes up to you from the deep ;

‘Oh ! had he lived to reach his native land,
 And then expired, I would have blessed the strand.
 But, where my husband lies I may not lie ;
 I cannot come with broken heart to sigh
 O'er his loved dust, and strow with flowers his turf :
 His pillow hath no cover but the surf :
 I may not pour the soul-drop from mine eye
 Near his cold bed :—he slumbers in the wave !
 Oh, I will love the sea, because it is his grave.’

And shall he, my friends, go down into that grave forgotten? Shall no voice be raised to do him honor, even in the house that, we may almost say, was raised by his voice? Shall no lips speak of him, and plead for a kind remembrance of him, in the temple where his lips, touched and warmed as they were by the living fires of God's altar, spoke so well for God and his goodness, and so eloquently

pleaded the cause of truth and righteousness in the great congregation? He shall not go down, thus unhonored, into the deep.

Fallen model of manly beauty and strength—set up once, by thy Maker's hand, to grace and beautify the temple of our devotions, but now thrown down and marred by death!

‘Thou shalt not float upon thy watery bier
Unwept, and welter to the parching wind
Without the meed of one melodious tear.’

Departed spirit, that even here wast clothed with light and power from on high!—we may not disregard thee in thy departure. We may not witness, unmoved, thy breaking away in darkness, and storm, and flame, and thy going up—thine own fires unquenched—where Light and Power are enthroned.

Departed leader of the disciples of Jesus!—with the eye of christian faith we follow thee to brighter and better abodes, to the communion of the sanctified and redeemed:

‘There entertain thee all the saints above,
In solemn troops and sweet societies.’

Thou wouldst not have us mourn our loss, which is their gain and thine. We will not question the wisdom that hath called thee to thy reward; but, as we have often bowed whilst thou wast with us here, we still bow with thee before the throne of our common Father, and say, ‘Thy will be done!’



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